

INTRODUCTION OF THE END THE
MANDATE ACT**HON. RON PAUL**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2011

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the End the Mandate Act. This legislation repeals the sections of the health reform law that force all Americans to purchase federally-approved health insurance plans.

As two federal courts have ruled, forcing every American to obtain health insurance is a blatant violation of the Constitution. Defenders of this provision claim the Congress's constitutional authority to regulate "interstate commerce" gives Congress the power to mandate every American obtain a federally-approved health insurance plan. However, even the broadest definition of "regulating interstate commerce" cannot reasonably encompass forcing Americans to engage in commerce by purchasing health insurance.

Forcing every American to obtain a congressionally-approved health insurance plan is not just unconstitutional; it is a violation of the basic freedom to make our own decisions regarding how best to meet the health care needs of ourselves and our families.

Mr. Speaker, the health care law does not just require Americans to buy health insurance—it forces them to obtain what the federal government decides is "minimum essential coverage." Some people may claim that the requirement to have "minimal essential coverage" does not impose an unreasonable burden on Americans. There are two problems with this claim.

First, the very imposition of a health insurance mandate, no matter how "minimal," violates the principles of individual liberty upon which this country was founded.

Second, the mandate is unlikely to remain "minimal" for long. The experience of states that allow their legislatures to mandate what benefits health insurance plans must cover has shown that politicizing health insurance inevitably makes health insurance more expensive. As the cost of government-mandated health insurance rises, Congress will likely respond by increasingly subsidizing health insurance for an ever increasing number of Americans.

When the cost of government-mandated insurance proves to be an unsustainable burden on individuals, small employers, and the government, Congress will likely impose price controls on medical treatments, and even go so far as to limit what procedures and treatments mandatory insurance will reimburse.

Mr. Speaker, Congress made a grave error by forcing all Americans to purchase health insurance. The mandate violates fundamental principles of individual liberty, and will lead to further government involvement in health care. I therefore ask all of my colleagues to join me in correcting this mistake by cosponsoring the End the Mandate Act.

POE POH

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2011

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Poe Poh for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Poe Poh is a 12th grader at Arvada High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Poe Poh is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Poe Poh for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all her future accomplishments.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DONALD A. MANZULLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2011

Mr. MANZULLO. Mr. Speaker, on Thursday, March 10, 2011, and on Monday, March 14, 2011, I missed a series of votes because I was ill. If I was here, I would have voted "no" on rollcall No. 168, "no" on rollcall No. 169, "no" on rollcall No. 170, "yea" on rollcall No. 171; "yea" on rollcall No. 175; and "yea" on rollcall No. 176.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BEN RAY LUJÁN

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2011

Mr. LUJÁN. Mr. Speaker, due to my participation in a meeting with some of my constituents, I was unable to be present for rollcall vote No. 174. Had I been present, I would have voted "no" on this vote.

NOAH BENNETT

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2011

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Noah Bennett for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Noah Bennett is a 7th grader at Drake Middle School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Noah Bennett is exemplary of the type of achievement

that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Noah Bennett for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all his future accomplishments.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2011

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, on March 11, 2011, I missed rollcall votes Nos. 172–174 due to a tsunami in my district. Had I been present, I would have voted in the following manner: rollcall No. 172, "aye;" rollcall No. 173, "aye;" and rollcall No. 174, "nay."

INTRODUCTION OF THE
AFFORDABLE GAS PRICE ACT**HON. RON PAUL**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2011

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce the Affordable Gas Price Act. This legislation reduces gas prices by reforming government policies that artificially inflate the price of gas. Because of a number of factors, including the instability in the Middle East, the average price of gas has risen approximately 13% since the beginning of the year. In some areas, the price of gas is approaching \$4.00 per gallon. There is thus a real possibility that the American people will soon be once again hard hit by skyrocketing gas prices.

High gas prices threaten our fragile economy and diminishes the quality of life for all Americans. One industry that is particularly hard hit is the trucking industry. The effects of high gas prices on the trucking industry will be reflected in increased costs for numerous consumer goods, thus further harming American consumers.

Unfortunately, many proposals to address the problem of higher energy prices involve increasing government interference in the market through policies such as price controls. These big government solutions will, at best, prove ineffective and, at worst, bring back the fuel shortages and gas lines of the seventies.

Instead of expanding government, Congress should repeal federal laws and policies that raise the price of gas, either directly through taxes or indirectly through regulations that discourage the development of new fuel sources. This is why my legislation repeals the federal moratorium on offshore drilling and allows oil exploration in the ANWR reserve in Alaska. My bill also ensures that the National Environmental Policy Act's environmental impact statement requirement will no longer be used as a tool to force refiners to waste valuable time and capital on nuisance litigation. The Affordable Gas Price Act also provides tax incentives to encourage investment in new refineries.